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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SF, PINT
SUBJ: BLACK ATTITUDES: URBAN BLACK CHURCH LEADERS

REFS: 76 PRETORIA 5192, CAPE TOWN 0054

1. SUMMARY. GROWING BLACK IMPATIENCE, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE YOUTH, HAS BEGUN TO IMPRESS UPON THE URBAN BLACK CLERGY REALIZATION THAT THE CHRUCH MUST TAKE A MORE ACTIVE PART IN THE GROWING CHALLENGE TO THE APARTHEID SYSTEM. THEY ARE CONSCIOUS OF THE RELEVANCE
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OF THE CHURCH BEING AT STAKE. THE REWPONSIBILITY IS BEWILDERING TO SOME, STIMULATING TO OTHERS, AND FRUSTRATING TO ALL BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF CHANGING THE PATTERNS OF THE PAST. A HANDFUL OF BLACK CHURCHMEN ARE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE THE LEAD, AND MANY OTHERS ARE PREPARED TO FOLLOW.

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2. WHITH SOME EXCEPTIONS AND DESPITE CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY, BLACK CHURCH LEADERS OF THE TOWNSHIPS SEEM GRADUALLY TO BE COMING TO THE COMMON BASIC CONCLUSION THAT BLACKS WILL HAVE TO RELY ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON THEIR OWN RESOURCES IF THEIR CONDITION IS TO IMPROVE IN ANY SUBSTANTIAL WAY. THEY EXPECT FEW IF ANY VOLUNTARY CONCESSIONS FROM THE WHITE REGIME AND LITTLE MATERIAL SUPPORT FROM OUTSIDE. THE CHURCH IS ENVISIONED AS A CATALYST FOR RALLYING BLACK UNITY, SELF-CONFIDENCE AND RESOLVE.

3. THE OBSTACLES FACING THE BLACK CHURCH LEADERS ARE MANY. THEY HAVE SO FAR EVOLVED NO COMMON PLAN OF ACTION. THEY BLACK COMMUNITY IS DIVIDED AMONG SEVERAL FAITHS, AND THE CHURCH IS HANDICAPPED BY IDENTIFICATION IN SOME BLACK EYES WITH THE WHITE-DOMINATED STATUS QUO. THE LEADERSHIP IS INHIBITED NOT ONLY BY THE RISKS INVOLVED IN ORKING AGAINST THE INSTERESTS OF THE WHITE REGIME BUT ALSO BY THE RESISTANCE AMONG CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONS TO SECULAR VENTURES.

4. WHETHER THE LEADERSHIP WILL BE WILLING AND ABLE TO PERSERVERE IN GUIDAING THE BLACK CHURCHES IN NEW, MORE MEANINGFUL DIRECTIONS REMAINS TO BE SEEN. THERE IS A MODEST HOPEFULNESS AND, EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO ARE HESITANT TO ACT, A STRONG SENSE OF URGENCY. THOUGH CAUTIOUSNESS IS COMMON, THE NUMBER OF BLACK CLERGYMEN ENGAGED IN SEEKING A MORE ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE ROLE FOR THE CHURCH APPEARS TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER THAN IN THE PAST. THERE IS A LONG WAY TO GO, HOWEVER, BEFORE THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHURCHES ACHIEVE THE UNITY OF PURPOSE AND BOLDNESS NEEDED TO MOVE THEM TOWARD THE POTENTIAL THEY HAVE AS INSTRUMENTS OF CHANGE.

5. THIS ASSESSMENT OF BLACK CHURCH LEADERS' ATTITUDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS TENTATIVE AND RELEVANT PRIMARILY TO URBAN CENTERS. IT IS FOUNDED SUBSTANTIALLY ON A SAMPLING IN THE CAPE TOWN, PRETORIA AND JOHANNESBURG AREAS, ALTHOUGH WITH CHURCH LEADERS HAVING REGIONAL OR NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. THE VIEWS REFLECTED HRE COME FROM ACTIVIST AS WELL AS CONSERVATIVE LEADERS, BOTH YOUNG AND OLD, IN BOTH THE HISTORIC AND THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES. A FEW WHITE MINISTERS AND ALYMEN CLOSE TO THE BLACK COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN CONSULTED AS WELL. THE PRINCIPAL GENERALIZATIONS MADE HAVE BEEN TESTED WITH A NUMBER OF THE CHURCH LEADERS IN AN EFFORT TO CONFIRM THEIR VALIDITY. END SUMMARY.

6. NEW PERSPECTIVES. THE URBAN BLACK CLERGY ARE

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EPEERIENCING A FEELING OF INCREASED AND ALERTED
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE WAKE OF THE DISTURBING EVENTS OF
THE PAST YEAR. THEY ACKNOWLEDGE A NEW, MORE ACUTE AWARE-
NESS THAT THE CHURCH IS PARCTICALLY THE ONLY INSTITUTION
TO WHICH BLACKS CAN TURN WITH AT LEAST SOME SAFETY FOR
SYMPATHY, HELP AND LEADERSHIP. A FEW SEEM TO SHY AWAY
FROM FACING THE RESPONSIBILITY, OTHERS ARE STIMULATED BY
IT,SAND MOST ARE UNEASY AND DEEPLY FRUSTRATED BY THE
OBSTACLES TO THE CENTRAL OBJECTIVE OF MAKING THE CHURCHES
MEANINGFUL TO THEIR PARISHONERS IN TODAY'S CIRCUMSTANCES
OF GROWING BLACK IMPATIENCE AND PRESSURE FTWFCHANGE.
THE APARTHEID SYSTEM IS ONLY PART OF THE PROBLEM. MANY
OF THE DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTING BLACK RELIGIOUS LEADERS
ARE ATTIBUTABLE TO THE CHURCHES THEMSELVES AGC TO
CONFLICTS WITHIN THE BLACK COMMUNITY. BOJWLER

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - FOR TEXT
7. PROBLEMS OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP. THE BLACKS ARE
DIVIDED AMONG THE ROMAN CATHOLIC, SEVERAL PROTESTANT

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AND THE 3,500 TO 4,000 AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES.
ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT FIGURES, THE INDEPENDENTS
COLLECTIVELY HAVE OVER 4 MILLION ADHERENTS; THE BLACK
NUMERICAL STRENGHT OF THE HISTORIC CHURCHES RANGES FROM
NEARLY 2 MILION TO 220,000 N THE FOLLOWING ORDER:
METHODIST, CATHOLIC, ANGLICAN, DUTCH REFORM, LUTHERAN,
PRESBYTERIAN, AND CONGREGATIONAL. THE INDEPENDENTS ARE
EXCLUSIVELY BLACK; THE BLACK HISTORIC CHURCHES ALL HAVE
SEPARATE WHITE COUNTERPARTS AND WHITES DOMINATE THEIR
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UPPER HIERARCHIES. WHAT APPEARS TO BE FAIRLY EFFECTIVE
ECUNENISM HAS ENCOURAGED COOPERATION AMONG THE BLACK
HISTORIC CHURCHES, A COOPERATION WHICH SEEMS NOW TO BE
GROWING, AND IT REACHES TENTATIVELY OUT TO SOME OF THE
INDEPENDENTS AS WELL. THE LATTER HAVE SEVERAL UNIFYING
ASSOCIATIONS OF THEIR OWN, BUT AT PRESENT TIME THEY
ARE WEAK AND SUBJECT TO INTERMITTENT POWER STURGGLES.

8. THE HISTORIC CHURCHES ARE BURDENED BY IDENTIFICATION
IN MANY BLACK EYES AS PART OF THE STRUCTURE OF WHITE
DOMINATION. UNTIL RECENTLY, THE CHRUCHES WERE ON THE
WHOLE INCLINED TO SHUN SECULAR MATTERS. RESISTING ACCOM-
MODATION TO AFRICAN TRADITIONS AND VALUES, THEY DEVOTED
THEMSELVES TO SPIRITUAL AFFAIRS, INSTILLING CHRISTIAN
VALUES, AMONG WHICH THEY INCLUEDED PATIENT ACCEPTANCE OF
LIFE AS IT IS IN ANTICIPATION OF A BETTER WORLD TO COME.
THE SENSE OF THE CHURCHES BEING WHITE INSTRUMENTS IS
ACCENTUATED BY THE PREPONDERANCE OF WHITES IN THE
HIERARCHIES AND SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE ON WHITES.
THE HISTORIC CHURCHES WERE RELATIVELY LESS DISTURBED BY
THESE CONDITIONS IN EARLIER TIMES WHEN THE BLACK
COMMUNITY WAS PREPARED MORE OR LESS PASSIBELY TO ACCEPT
INFERIOR STATUS AND WAS SATISFIED THAT THE CHURCH
FILFILLED ITS FUNCTION IF IT MET SPIRITUAL NEEDS AND
BROUGHT SUCH BENDFITS AS EDUCATION AND MEDICAL SERVICES.
THE LEVEL OF SOCIAL TENSION INVOLVING BLACKS WAS LOWER
THEN IT IS TODAY. WITH THE EMERGANCE OF BLACK
CONSCIOUSNESS, HOWEVER, THE CHURCHES BEGAN TO BE SEEN
AMONG SOME BLACKS AS DEVICES FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE
INCREASINGLY DETESTED STATUS QUO, AS COLLABORATORS IN
THE ESTABLISHMENT AND PERPETUATION OF PERVASIVE
INSTITUTIONALIZED DISCRIMINATION. BLACKS INCREASINGLY
SEE THE INCONSISTENCY, IF NOT HYPOCRISY, OF PREACHING
PEACE, COMPASSION, AND THE EUQLITY OF MEN BEFORE GOD
WHILE ACQUIESCING IN HARSH AND VIOLENTLY-ENFORCED
INEQUALITY.
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9. WITH EXCEPTIONS, THE CHALLENGE TO THE HISTORIC CHURCHES COMES MORE FROM THE YOUTH THAN THE OLDER GENERATIONS WHICH ARE NOT A RESTLESS AND QUESTIONING. THOUGH THE CHURCHES WERE WIDELY PERCEIVED AS BEING INEFFECTIVE BY-STANDERS DURING THE RECENT DISTURBANCES, SOME PRESERVED CREDIBILITY BY PROVIDING SANCTUARY AND MEETING PALCES FOR REBELLIOUS YOUTH, TAKING THEIR SIDE AGAINST THE EXESSES OF THE REGIME IN PUTTING DOWN THE DISTURBANCES, AND ASSISTING THE FAMILIES OF THOSE KILLED, INJURED OR ARRESTED. A NUMBER OF CHURCH LEADERS ASSERT THAT RESPECT AONG THE YOUNG FOR THE CHURCH HAS IN FACT STRENGTHENED. MORE, HOWEVER, SEE THE YOUGH AS SKEPTICAL THOUGH WILLING FOR A TIME TO WAIT AND SEE. STILL OTHERS, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNGER RADICALLY-INCLINED MINISTERS, CONSIDER THE CONFIDENCE OF YOUTH IN THE CHURCH EVEN SHAKIER. THEY WOULD CITE AND AGREE WITH THE OBSERVATION OF ONE YOUNG BLACK THAT "THE CHURCH IS SLEEPING THROUGH A REVOLUTION."

10. THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES ARE ON FIRMER GROUND. THEY ARE BLACK CREATIONS WHICH FIRST APPEARED ON A SMALL SCALE CLOSE TO A CENTURY AGO IN REJECTION OF WHITE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP. OVER THE YARS THEY HAVE CLARLY GAINED WIDE-SPREAD ATTRACTION, ESPECIALLY IN THE JOHANNESBURG AND PRETORIA TOWNSHIPS. MANY OF THEM ARE SMALL--OFTEN WITH NO MORE THAN 20 OR SO CONGREGANTS; OTHERS GO TO 1,000 MEMBERS OR MORE AND ONE CLAIMS 200,000 ADHERENTS. THEIR STRENGTH LIES IN THEIR ADAPTION TO AFRICA TRADITIONS, THEIR INTIMATE, TIGHTLY-KNIT SELF-RELIANCE, AND THE APPEAL EACH INDIVIDUAL CHURCH HAS ACROSS ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC LINES. THEY HAVE, MORE-OVER, BEEN INCLINED TO BE MORE "THIS WORLDLY" THEN THE HISTORIC CHURCHES. THEY DO NOT, HOWEVER, ATTRACT THE YOUNG: MEMBERSHIP IS PREDOMINATLY MIDDLE-AGED, POOR, AND UNSOPHISTICATED. THEIR LEDERSHIP TENDS TO BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHARISMATIC BUT UNLETTERED AND THEOLOGICALLY UNTRAINED. IT IS COMMONLY ASSERTED THAT THE INDEPENDENTS ARE LARGELY POWER BASES FOR AMBITIOUS BLACKS COMPETING WITH ONE ANOTHER FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP. THERE IS APPARENTLY SOME TRUTH TO THIS AS IS UNDERSTANDABLE IN A SOCIETY OFFERING FEW OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR BLACK LEADERSHIP. THIS FUNCTION OF IDENTIFYING BLACK LEADERS, COUPLED WITH EXCLUSIVE BLACKNESS, SELF-SUFFICIENCY, AND UNORTHODOXY, I AMONG THE REASON WHY A NUMBER OF THE

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MORE RADICAL BLACKS CONSIDER THAT, AMONG THE CHURCHES,
ONLY THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENTS ARE LIKELY TO BE RELEVANT
TO THE BLACK STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION. BOWDLER

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11. AS THEY ATTEMPT TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO SERVE THE
BLACK COMMUNITY, THE LEADERS OF THE HISTORIC AND THE
INDEPENDENT CHURCHES ARE INHIBITED BY BOTH THE STATE
AND THEIR OWN PEOPLE. TO STRAY FROM SPIRITUAL MATTERS
IN WAYS WHICH BRING CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT
IS TO EXPOSE THE LEADERS AND THEIR FOLLOWERS TO IMPRISON-
MENT, BANNING OR DEPORTATION TO HOMELANDS. FINANCIAL
SUPPORT FROM WHITE SISTER CHURCHES IS ALSO ENDANGERED.
THOSE WILLING TO TAKE THESE RISKS ARE RESTRAINED BY
CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONS WHICH CONSIDER SECULAR
VENTURES IMPROPER OR TOO HAZARDOUS FOR THE CHURCH. IN THE
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HISTORIC CHURCHES THEY ARE SO THOROUGHLY INDOCTRINATED WITH EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS THAT THEY RESIST EVEN THE SLIGHTEST AFRICANIZATION OF LITURGY OR DOGMA.

12. THE BLACK CLERGY WHO BELIEVE THEY HAVE A CHRISTIAN DUTY TO JOIN IN THE SEARCH FOR RELEASE OF BLACKS FROM THE OPPRESSION OF APARTHEID, ARE OVERWHELMINGLY DEDICATED TO CHANGE BY PEACEFUL MEANS. THEY ARE, HOWEVER, TROUBLED BY THEIR INABILITY TO OFFER IMMEDIATELY PROMISING ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE. DURING THE RECENT UPRISINGS OF YOUTH IN SEVERAL URBAN CENTERS, BLACK CHURCH LEADERS TENDED TO STAND MUTE; THEY FOUND THEY COULD NEITHER CONDONE NOR CONDEMN THE ACTIONS OF THE YOUNG. THE EXPERIENCE HAD A DEVASTATING EFFECT ON SOME; ONE LEADING BLACK CHURCHMAN ACKNOWLEDGED TO US HE HAD RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDED THERE IS IN FACT NO ALTERNATIVE TO VIOLENCE AND THAT ONLY CONCERN FOR HIS FAMILY PREVENTED HIM FROM LEAVING THE CHURCH TO JOIN THE ADVOCATES OF FORCE.

13. EXPECTATIONS: IN LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, THE START-ING POINT FOR BLACK CHURCH LEADERS, WHETHER OR NOT THEY BELIEVE THE CHURCH ITSELF MUST AGGRESSIVELY WORK FOR CHANGE, IS THAT LITTLE RELIEF WILL COME VOLUNTARILY FROM THE WHITE COMMUNITY. THE AFRIKANER REGIME WILL REMAIN IN CHARGE AND IMMOVABLE; ITS WHITE OPPONENTS WILL REMAIN INEFFECTIVE. THERE IS A GENERAL ASSUMPTION THAT THERE WILL BE MORE VIOLENCE AT AN INCREASING TEMPO. EXPRES-SIONS OF OUTSIDE SUPPORT ARE WELCOMED AS PSYCHOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT, BUT THERE IS ONLY MARGINAL HOPE THAT SOME MATERIALLY EFFECTIVE HELP WILL BE FORTHCOMING; THE UN IS SEEN AS USELESS, THE OAU AS "MERE WORDS", AND THE US AS "SEEMINGLY HELPLESS". THE COMMON CONCLUSION IS THAT THE BLACK COMMUNITY MUST FIND ITS OWN MEANS OF EFFECTING CHANGE. THE MORE ASSERTIVE CHURCH LEADERS EXPECT THAT, UNLESS THE CHURCH TAKES AN ACTIVE PART IN SEEKING CHANGE, IT WILL BE SEEN TO HAVE FAILED IN ITS
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RESPONSIBILITIES AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND ABILITY TO INFLUENCE EVENTS WILL WANE.

14. COURSES OF ACTION: PARTICIPATION BY BLACK CHURCH LEADERS IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IS NOT NEW TO SOUTH AFRICA. MANY HAVE WORKED ENERGETICALLY AGAINST APARTHEID AND ITS ABUSES FOR YEARS, ACTING OFTEN THROUGH

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AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF SUCH MULTIRACIAL INSTITUTIONS
AS THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND THE CHRISTIAN
INSTITUTE. NOW, HOWEVER, THERE IS A NEW SENSE OF URGENCY,
A WIDER INVOLVEMENT OF BLACK CLERGY, STRONGER BELIEF
IN SELF-HELP, AND FIRMER CONVICTION THAT RESULTS CAN
EVENTUALLY BE ACHIEVED.

15. THE URBAN BLACK CLERGY ARE NEVERTHELESS CONFUSED
AND UNCERTAIN OF THEMSELVES. A FEW APPEAR RESIGNED TO
CARRYING ON CAUTIOUSLY AS IN THE PAST AND HOPING FOR THE
BEST. A FEW AMONG THE YOUNGER MINISTERS, PERSUADED THAT
POLARIZATION HAS BEEN IRREVOCABLY IMPOSED BY THE WHITE
REGIME, ARE SHARPLY COMBATIVE IN OUTLOOK. A GOOD MANY
OTHERS REJECT THE EXTREMES BUT, WITHOUT INSPIRATION OF
THEIR OWN, LOOK TO SOMEONE ELSE FOR THE LEAD. A
RESOLUTE HANDFUL ARE MAKING ATTEMPTS AT SHOWING THE WAY.

16. THERE IS NO THOUGH-OUT AND GENERALLY AGREED PLAN
OF ACTION, GOALS ARE NOT WELL-DEFINED, AND COORDINATION
OF EFFORT IS OFTEN WEAK OR WHOLLY ABSENT. A KIND OF
MAIN-STREAM CONSENSUS ON WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NONETHE-
LESS SEEMS TO BE EMERGING, WITH FOCUS LESS ON DIRECT
AND IMMEDIATE CONFRONTATION WITH THE SYSTEM THAN ON
STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF BLACKS ULTIMATELY TO EFFECT
CHANGE.

17. AMONG THE STEPS FIRST IN IMPORTANCE TO THOSE SEEKING
TO LEAD THE BLACK CHURCHES IN NEW MEANINGFUL DIRECTIONS
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IS THE FORTHRIGHT ADVOCACY OF BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS.
SOME CALL IT BLACK THEOLOGY AND OTHERS SELF-RELIANCE,
SELF-CONFIDENCE, OR EVEN "PREACHING POLITICS", BUT THE
PURPOSE IS THE SAME: THE BLACKS MUST ABANDON THE SILENT
PASSIVITY AND INFERIORITY COMPLEXES OF THE PAST, JOIN
TOGETHER IN INSISTING ON THEIR OWN WORTH, AND BOLDLY
REGISTER THEIR DISCONTENT AND DEMANDS FOR CHANGE, TAKING
RISKS OF PENALTY IF NECESSARY. THE MORE SOPHISTICATED
RECOGNIZE AND ADVOCATE THIS COURSE AS AKIN TO THAT
PURSUED BY AFRIKANERDOM AND PARTICULARLY THE WHITE DUTCH
REFORMED CHURCH FOR A HUNDRED YEARS.

18. IT FOLLOWS THAT BLACK CHURCH LEADERS ARE ALSO
ANXIOUS TO SECURE AN INCREASINGLY PROMINENT ROLE FOR
BLACKS IN CHURCH GOVERNMENT. THIS, OF COURSE, REQUIRES
THE COLLABORATION OF WHITES TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT. THE
CATHOLICS, WHOSE BISHOPS' CONFERENCE HAS JUST PUBLICLY
DECLARED ITSELF ON THE SIDE OF BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS,
SEEMS AT PRESENT TO BE MAKING THE GREATER HEADWAY IN
THIS RESPECT. THE OTHERS, HOWEVER, ARE FOLLOWING SUIT

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WITH VARYING DEGREES OF RESOLVE.

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19. SUPPORTIVE COROLLARY STEPS ENVISIONED BY THESE SAME LEADERS ARE TO BRING THE VARIOUS BLACK CHURCHES INTO CLOSER ASSOCIATION WITH ONE ANOTHER AND TO INTRODUCE AFRICAN CUSTOMS INTO RITUAL AND ORGANIZATION. SEVERAL MINISTERS HAVE BEGUN TO MAKE MORE USE OF THE SANCTUARY OF THE CHURCH TO TURN "CHOIR PRACTICE" INTO COMMUNITY POLITICAL MEETINGS.

20. AT THE PRICE OF DISTURBING SOME AMONG THE OLDER GENERATION BY MOVING IN THESE DIRECTIONS, THE LEADER-SHIP TENDS TO HAVE UPPERMOST IN MIND THE RESTLESS YOUTH
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WHOSE SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION THEY BELIEVE ARE ESSENTIAL IF THE CHURCH IS TO CONTINUE AS A RELEVANT INSTITUTION. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUNG AND OLD BRING THE LEADERS TO ANOTHER OF THEIR PRIORITY OBJECTIVES: THE CHURCH MUST STRIVE TO CLOSE THE GENERATION GAP. ONE DEVICE GAINING ACCEPTANCE IS THE INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THE CHURCHES.

21. ANOTHER PRESSING REQUIREMENT IN THE VIEW OF BLACK CHURCH LEADERS IS REDOUBLED EFFORTS BY THE CHURCH IN THE EDUCATION OF BOTH THE YOUTH AND THEIR ELDERS. THE AIM IS TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION AND UNDERSTANDING SO BLACKS WILL BE ENABLED MORE RATIONALLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO COPE WITH THE PROCESS OF FINDING A WAY OUT OF THEIR PRESENT STATE. FOR THOSE CHURCH LEADERS WHO BELIEVE SOME FORM OF ELEVATED STATUS FOR BLACKS IS RELATIVELY CLOSE AT HAND, IMPROVED EDUCATION NOW IS AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE.

2. ENJOYING NARROWER SUPPORT AMONG LEADING BLACK CLERGYMEN IS THE PROPOSITION THAT CONTINUING ATTEMPTS SHOULD BE MADE TO BRING THE WHITE AND BLACK CHURCHES CLOSER TOGETHER TO ALLEVIATE THE MUTUAL IGNORANCE AND FEAR WHICH ARE AT THE ROOT OF APARTHEID AND THE BUILD-ING BLACK-WHITE CONFRONTATION. THE HOPE IS THAT THIS WILL STEM THE TREND TOWARD CONFRONTATION, HEAD OFF THE MORE EXTREME EPISODES OF VIOLENCE AND GRADUALLY BRING ABOUT BLACK ASD WHITE REALIZATION OF A COMMON INTEREST IN CHANGE. TO THE SAME END AND WITH A FAINT BELIEF THAT AT LEAST SOME MODEST CONCESSIONS MIGHT BE WON IN THE PROCESS, THE ADVOCATES OF THIS POINT OF VIEW FAVOR CONTINUING PATIENT DIALOGUE WITH THE AFRIKANER REGIME ITSELF. OPPONENTS TO THIS KIND OF EFFORT ARGUE IT IS FUTILE AND IN ANY EVENT POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS TO THE CREDIBILITY OF THE BLACK CHURCHES. IT NATUALLY HAS LITTLE ATTRACTION FOR THE AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OR FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE DESIRABILITY AND INEVIT-ABILITY OF BLACK-WHITE POLARIZATION.

23. THE BLACK CLERGY VIEW AS AN IMMEDIATE AND CRUCIAL TEST FOR THE CHURCH THE CONFRONTATION WHICH HAS RECENTLY ARISEN WITH THE STATE OVER THE ISSUE OF PRIVATE CHURCH SCHOOL INTEGRATION. THE THREE HISTORIC CHURCHES WITH THE LARGEST BLACK CONSTITUENCIES ARE INVOLVED: THE CATHOLICS HAVE TAKEN THE LEAD IN DEFIANCE OF THE LAW TO BRING PERHAPS 200 BLACK, COLORED AND INDIAN CHILDREN

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INTO SOME OF THEIR PREVIOUSLY ALL-WHITE SCHOOLS; THE
ANGLICANS HAVE DONE THE SAME ON A MUCH LESSER SCALE;
AND THE METHODISTS ARE PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO THE
PRINCIPLE. THOUGH AS A PRACTICAL MATTER FEW BLACK
YOUNGSTERS HAVE THE FINANCIAL MEANS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF PRIVATE CHURCH SCHOOL INTEGRATION, IF THE CHURCHES
RETREAT UNDER THE THREAT OF POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT ACTION
TO CLOSE THEIR SCHOOLS, THE BLOW TO THE STANDING OF
THE CHURCH IN GENERAL WOULD BE SEVERE. WHILE MANY
MIGHT NOT HAVE SOUGHT THIS CONFRONTATION WITH THE STATE,
NOW THAT IT IS A FACT, LEADING BLACK MINISTERS APPEAR
NEARLY UNANIMOUS IN INSISTING THE CHURCH MUST HOLD ITS
GROUND.

24. CONCLUSION: WE HAVE AN INADEQUATE BASIS AT THIS
STAGE FOR PREDICTING WITH ANY ASSURANCE THE ULTIMATE
CONSEQUENCES OF THE FERMENT AMONG THE URBAN BLACK CLERGY
AND THE NEW DIRECTIONS THEY ARE CONTEMPLATING AND TEST-
ING. COLLECTIVELY THE CHURCHES PROVIDE THE ONLY WELL-
ESTABLISHED, NATION-WIDE STRUCTURE ON WHICH THE
MUSTERING OF BLACK CHALLENGE TO THE APARTHEID SYSTEM
COULD BE BASED. THERE EXISTS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY
NO OTHER INSTITUTION OF SIMILAR DIMENSION. WHETHER
THE POTENTIAL OF THE CHURCHES AS A FORCE FOR CHANGE
CAN BE REALIZED IS UNCERTAIN. THE WHITE REGIME WILL
DO EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO PREVENT IT. AND BEFORE
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THE CHURCHES CAN BECOME A TELLING INFLUENCE, A GREAT
DEAL MORE WILL HAVE TO BE DONE ABOUT BRINGING THEM
TOGETHER AND INSPIRING BLACK SELF-CONFIDENCE, INITY
AND RESOLVE.BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, RELIGIOUS LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770098-0252
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Retention: 0
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Review Content Flags:
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Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3039331
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BLACK ATTITUDES: URBAN BLACK CHURCH LEADERS
TAGS: PINT, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/39f734b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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